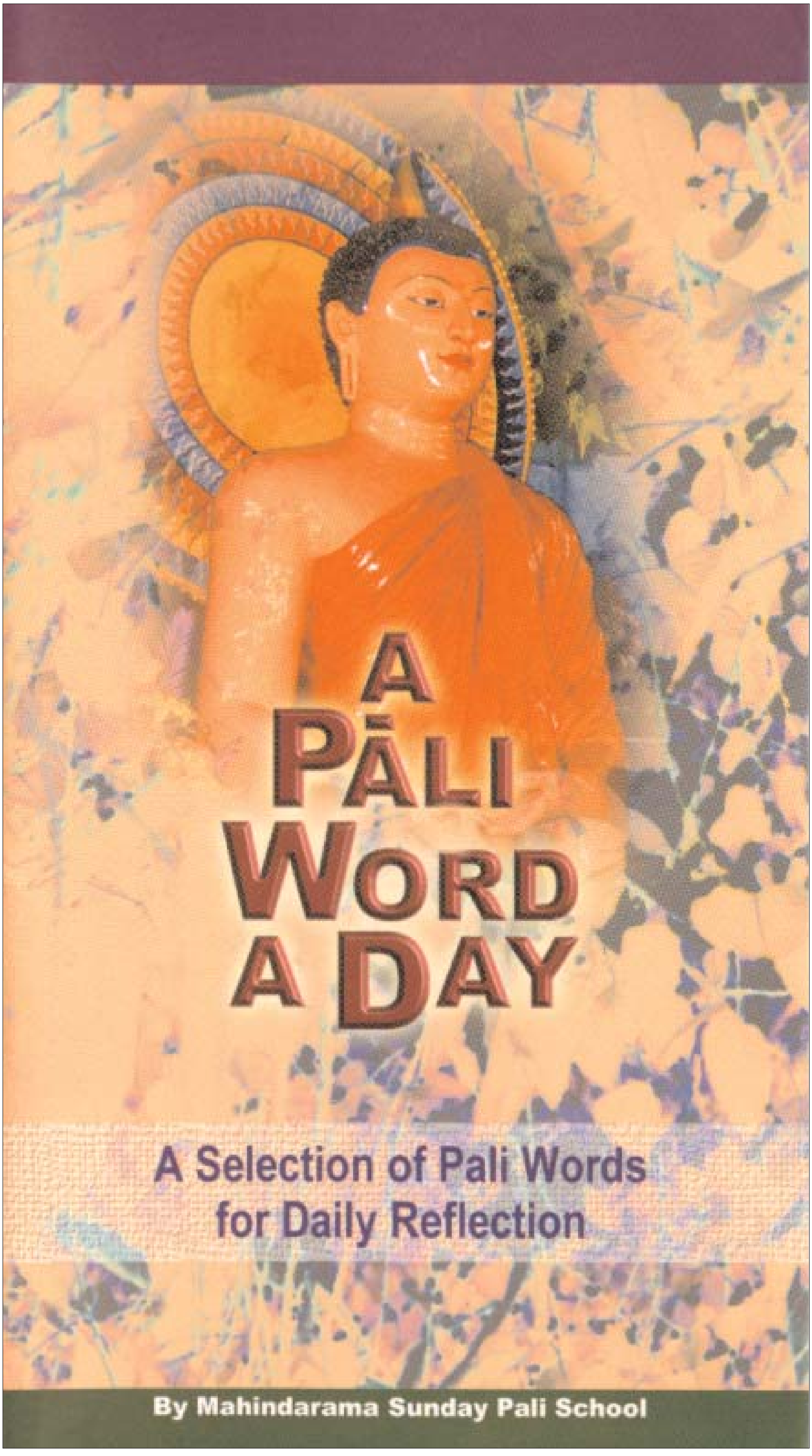
A Pali Word a Day

A Selection of Pali Words for Daily Reflection

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Buddha Dharma Education Association Inc.


A PĀLI WORD A DAY
A Selection of Pali Words for Daily Reflection
By Mahindarama Sunday Pali School

CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION

This booklet aims to assist new Buddhist students who are unfamiliar with some of the Pali words often used in the study of Buddhism.

As the title of the booklet suggests, we encourage the learning and use of Pali words by learning one word each day. The booklet can serve as both a dictionary and a glossary of terms for your reference.

We selected these basic Pali words as a foundation for a deeper understanding of the Buddha-Dhamma – further study and research into the Pali Ti-Pitaka is strongly recommended.

May this booklet enhance your studies and promote your progress upon the path of our Master – the Buddha.

ABHAYA

…fearless

Abhaya **Dāna** – Giving of non-fear, trust, warmness, tolerance. In the consideration of the Gifts, when one gives space and allowance for others to move and time to think, or does not belittle their capabilities or show up their weaknesses, one is considered as giving non-fear.

In **Anguttara Nikāya**, the book of the three, verse 172, the Buddha said that one should give in such a way that the donee does not feel humiliated, belittled or hurt. One should give with due consideration and respect, and make the donee feel warmly welcomed and glad to return.

Personal involvement in the act of giving – such as giving with our own bare hands and promoting the rapport through our caring, willingness and concerned attitude towards the donee – will most definitely enhance the quality of our abhaya-dāna.

This will be even more so if we give things that are good, choice, useful and appropriate, and not things which are only fit to be thrown away.

ADHIṬṬHĀNA

…decision, resolution, aspiration, self-determination, will

Different to a vow, determination is based on wisdom, compassion and selflessness, and not promises that we have to pay back later.

It is also the key virtue required to achieve our spiritual path. Through a strong determination one perfects his **pāramīs**.

Buddhists like to make their aspiration at the **Bodhi** Tree. Just like the **Bodhisatta** Gotama did before He attained His Enlightenment, we make our adhiṭṭhāna by reciting,

"By the power of the merits that I have accumulated, may I…"

Whenever one does a good deed, such as **dāna**, one should make an aspiration:

"May this dāna of mine be a condition for me to learn, practice and realize the Truth until I attain Nibbāna."

ANATTĀ

…consists of two words, an-(no) and attā (soul or eternal self or metaphysical entity) = no-soul, no-self, ego-less

The anattā doctrine is one of the most important teachings of the Buddha. It is also the distinctive feature in Buddhism that can't be found in other major religions. Yet it is the most misunderstood, most misinterpreted and most distorted of all His teachings.

There is nothing we can call an inner core, which is eternal and blissful. There is also nothing we can call upon to exercise authority over the nature of things. There is no doer apart from doing, and no-one who is omnipotent, because everything is at the mercy of the constant creation and dissolution of conditioned things.

We are a compound of 5 **khandas** (aggregates) – which are interacting and dependent upon each other and make up the personality. No director, no doer, no experiencer, and no essence can be found.

Therefore there is no "I", "mine", "myself", etc. But body, feeling, perception, mental formation and consciousness phenomena together are what we experience as the "I".

ANICCA

…impermanence; transience

It is from the fact of impermanence that the other two characteristics; **dukkha** (suffering) and **anattā** (non-self), are derived.

Whatever arises and passes away is anicca. Whatever is anicca is suffering, and whatever is suffering is of non-self.

Anicca is the natural law of the universe. Everything – be it living or non-living, mind or matter – is subjected to change.

In the law of **Kamma** (cause and effect), everything is the creation of its preceding causes and is in turn a cause of the after-effects. Therefore, what is in existence is an ever-changing flux.

It is not anicca that causes suffering but the clinging to, and craving for, that which is permanent and everlasting.

The last words of the Buddha were…

"All component things are subject to change,
strive on with diligence."

BUDDHA

…the Enlightened One, the Perfect One,
the Holy One, the Omniscient

In order to attain Buddhahood, one must perfect oneself in the ten **Pāramīs** (prerequisites for Enlightenment).

Nibbāna can be attained through one of the following three **Yānas** (vehicles):

1. **Samma-Sam-Buddha** (Fully Enlightened One)
   One who aspires to become a Buddha must first make a firm resolution (**Bodhisatta** Vow) in the presence of a Buddha. Once he is proclaimed to be a Buddha in the future, he will have to practice the 10 pāramīs with self-sacrificing spirit to serve the suffering humanity.
2. **Pacceka Buddha**
   He who attains enlightenment without any spiritual assistance. He does not possess the faculty to enlighten others.
3. **Savaka Buddha** (**Arahant**)
   He who has completely eradicated all the defilement, including the 10 fetters, with guidance from the Buddha's teachings. He is capable of rendering spiritual assistance to others for their liberation.

CAKKA

...a wheel

The **Dhamma Cakka Pavatthana Sutta** (The discourse to set in motion the Wheel of Dhamma) teaches us the Four Noble Truths. It forms the basis on which the system of Buddhist philosophy was founded.

1. The Noble Truth of Suffering (**Dukkha**).
2. The Noble Truth of the Cause (**Samudaya**) of Suffering – that is, Craving (**Taṇhā**).
3. The Noble Truth of the Cessation (**Nirodha**) of Suffering – the attainment of Non-rebirth (**Nibbāna**).
4. The Noble Truth of the Path Leading to the Cessation of Suffering – **Ariya Aṭṭhagika Magga** (the Noble Eight-fold Path).

The first Truth is to be comprehend while the second one is to be eradicated. The third one is to be realized and the fourth one is to be developed.

The Noble Eightfold Path, also known as the Middle Way, (**Majjhima Paṭipadā**) is the method of avoiding the two extremes: Self-mortification that weakens one's intellect and self-indulgence that retards one's moral progress.

It consists of the eight Right Factors folded together for one to proceed in his journey of Truth and Liberation.

DĀNA

...giving, generosity, charity, liberality, the virtue of alms-giving to the poor and needy; also, making gifts to a bhikkhu or to the community of bhikkhus

It is the first step towards eliminating the defilement of greed, hatred and delusion, for every act of giving is an act of loving kindness (**mettā**) and compassion (**karuṇā**).

Dāna should be performed with the purpose of removing greed with **sammā-diṭṭhi** (right understanding.)

The three considerations of a giver are:

1. to feel happy with his wholesome deed before, during and after the danā.
2. to have **saddhā** (faith or confidence) in the Law of **Kamma** – Dana performed with right understanding will bear good results that are accompanied by **paññā** (wisdom).
3. making resolution (**Adhiṭṭhāna**) to attain Nibbāna – Although one may make worldly aspirations, such as good health, wealth and happiness, they must be made with the intention to support one's spiritual growth. Good health will enable one to practice meditation; wealth will enable one to continue doing danā and be born in the happy realm (**loka**) where **Dhamma** exists.

DOSA

…hatred, anger, ill will

It comes with many names and faces, such as dislike, grudges, enmity, aversion, etc. It also appears in a subtle form as retaliation over a result, upset over the uncertainty in life, resentment… and in disguise; dosa is boredom, indecisiveness, frustration, envy, helplessness, ignorance, etc.

Anger is harbored easily in the heart, especially over those words that are not suited to one's ears/ego. Anger is prompted by a cause, be it a mosquito bite or a sight that disgusts. There are two causes:

1. The repulsive/negative nature of the object. Things are changing all the time. They are not permanent. So are our thoughts, feelings and perceptions. If there is no dark, there is no bright.
2. The unsystematic attention towards that repulsive nature. A fool views the bright side with greediness and the dark with anger, while the wise views the bright with loving-kindness and the dark with detachment.

The manner of overcoming anger includes loving-kindness (**mettā**) in the heart, compassion (**karuṇā**), a sense of equanimity (**upekkhā**) and right understanding of the Law of **Kamma**. And if all four have failed, avoid the situation.

DUKKHA

...du (difficult) + kha (to endure) = suffering, ill, incapable of satisfying, a state of dis-ease in the sense of discomfort, frustration and disharmony with the environment

Birth (**Jati**) is suffering, so is aging or decay (**Jarā**), sickness (**vyādhi**), death (**maraṇa**), and disassociation from loved ones and not getting what one wants. In short, the five aggregates (**khandas**) of grasping are suffering.

The influence of sensuality is so tempting that we believe in the "Self". And the more we attach to that, the more suffering there will be.

The attachment to sense objects and not knowing, or ignorance, (**avijjā**) of their impermanence (**anicca**), underlies the cause of dukkha, which is manifested as craving (**taṇhā**).

The three types of Dukkha are:

1. suffering of the mind and body in the ordinary sense, such pain, discomfort, etc.
2. suffering of the aggregates due to the rising and falling away of the momentary phase of existence.
3. Dukkha caused by changes, or transience.

EHIPASSIKO

…"come and see"

This is one of the virtues of the **Buddha-dhamma**. The Buddha invites us to come and see, to examine, to verify, test and to experience the results of His teachings.

The learning of the Buddha-dhamma demands no blind faith. There are no commandments or rules to penalize followers who do not want to believe in it.

The only way for one to realize the Truth is to acquire the knowledge and practice by one's own free will. Forcing someone to accept certain teachings which they are not ready to receive will not benefit them in their spiritual progress.

The Buddha is not afraid to let His teachings be tested, for realization only comes from the practice of His teachings. The Buddha-dhamma is also **Svākkhāto**(well taught), **sandiṭṭhiko**(to be self-realized), **akāliko**(with immediate result), **opanayiko**(capable of being entered upon), **paccattaṃ veditabbo viññūhīti** (to be attained by the wise, each for himself).

JĀTAKA

…accounts of previous births (of the Buddha)

A work of the **Therāvada** (Doctrines of the Elders) Canon, it contains a collection of 547 stories of previous existences of Buddha Gotama.

Of great value in folklore and Buddhist mythology as the background of moral tales. Each Jātaka has its own moral story as it shows how the **Bodhisatta** practised and developed the virtues required for the attainment of Buddhahood.

The Jātaka Tales are accounts of the Buddha's previous lives, originally told by the Buddha to His disciples. In His previous lives the Buddha appeared in many forms, such as animals, human beings, **nagas** (dragons) and **devas** (heavenly beings).

The Jātakas emphasize the selflessness of compassion, love and kindness and the beauty of virtuous action.

The Jātakas teach us that we are fully responsible for our actions, and that what we think and do affects the quality of our lives. This basic principle is known as **Kamma**.

KAMMA

...actions performed with intention or conscious motive

The Law of Kamma – the law of cause and effect, action and the appropriate result of action.

All our actions fit into three classifications: namely thought (mental action), speech (verbal action) and body (physical action). Therefore, in order for these actions to become kamma, they must be associated with **cetanā** (volition) or intention. Thus kamma can be **kusala** (wholesome) or akusala (unwholesome).

Kamma is not a doctrine of pre-determination. The past influences the present but does not dominate it. The past and present influence the future.

The result of Kamma is called **Vipāka** (consequence) or **Phala** (fruition). And this leads to another better-known fundamental teachings of the Buddha – the doctrine of Rebirth.

Kamma is the chief cause of all the inequalities in the world, yet not everything is due to these past actions. The simple explanation of how Kamma works is: good begets good; bad begets bad; good and bad begets good and bad; neither good nor bad begets neither good nor bad.

KARUṆĀ

…compassion, harmless, willing to bear the pain of others

Karuṇā should be practiced with wisdom (**paññā**). It is a thought of peace and harmlessness meant to reduce the pain of other fellow beings that are not so fortunate compared to oneself.

At the height of this practice, one might even go to the extent of sacrificing one's own life to alleviate the suffering of others. It has the characteristic of a loving mother whose thoughts, words and deeds always tend to release the distress of her sick child.

The purpose of Karuṇā is to help eliminate the element of cruelty. The cultivation of Karuṇā is not just talking – action counts also. Compassion is the motivating factor for the making of a **Bodhisatta** Vow.

One must be able to identify the feelings of emotional upset caused by the suffering of others as being pity or grief, and not karuṇā. Karuṇā, like the other three virtues in the **Brahma Vihāras**, is a positive mental quality.

KAṬHINA

…hard, firm, unshakeable, Robe and the Robe Offering Ceremony (according to the ***Vinaya*** *commentary)*

Every year the Buddhist monks will observe their **Vassa** (rainy season retreat) for about three months. During this retreat, the monks go into intensive meditation practice.

At the end of the vassa, they are allowed to receive a new robe, or a piece of cloth for making a robe, from lay devotees. The Kaṭhina Robe is made of several pieces of cloth sewn together in the pattern of paddy fields and looks like a rag robe.

The Kaṭhina ceremony has to be celebrated within a month after the vassa in the **Sima** Hall in the Monastery or Temple where they dwelt during the vassa. There will be only one Kaṭhina Robe offered to the monk who spent the retreat according to the rules (selected by the community of monks in that Temple).

The offering of the Kaṭhina Robe is considered a very meritorious deed, because the merit accrued is as "hard" (Kaṭhina) as a diamond. The donors may go anywhere without fear, eat anything without danger, their belongings are safe from flood, fire and thieves, and they are liable to receive many clothes and own many possessions.

KHANTI

…patience, tolerance, endurance, forbearance

It is the enduring of suffering caused by others or the forbearance of others' wrongs.

A person who practices patience will not allow the thought of revenge or retaliation to enter his mind when he is tested with anger. Instead he tries to put the wrongdoer on the path of Righteousness and extends to him thoughts of love and compassion.

To practice khanti, one should be able to control one's temper through the right understanding of the real nature of life. By losing our temper, we are not only losing our peace, happiness, health, beauty, friendship and popularity, but also the ability to distinguish the good from the bad and the right from the wrong.

The characteristic of khanti is acceptance and its function is to endure the desirable and the undesirable things. While the manifestation of khanti is a non-oppositional character, the quality to achieve it is wisdom – the ability to see things as they really are. By understanding the three characteristics of life (**anicca**, **dukkha**, and **anattā**) and the law of Kamma, one will be able to manage one's senses.

KUSALA

…wholesome, meritorious, righteous, a term used to describe acts whose kammic effect will assist the progress in mind-development, or to produce pleasant results

A wholesome deed is an act:

1. which does not harm either the doer or others
2. which is praised and approved by the wise, and
3. which when performed conduces to the benefit and happiness of both oneself and others

Dasa Kusala Kamma (10 meritorious deeds)

1. **Danā** (generosity)
2. **Sīla** (virtue)
3. **Bhāvanī** (mental culture-meditation)
4. **Apacayana** (reverence, act of respect)
5. **Veyyāvacca** (service, rendering help)
6. **Pattidāna** (transference of merit)
7. **Pattānumodanā** (rejoicing in others' merit)
8. **Dhammasavaṅa** (listening to the doctrine)
9. **Dhammadesanā** (teaching the doctrine,)
10. **Diṭṭhijukamma** (straightening one's views) forming correct views, establishing right understanding

Akusala (unwholesome) Kamma includes killing, stealing. unchasteness, lying, slandering, harsh speech, frivolous talk, covetousness, ill will and false view.

LOBHA

*…greed, covetousness, a synonym of **taṅhā** (craving, desire) and **rāga** (passion)*

Being the root cause of evil, it transforms itself into many faces. Hoarding – holding on without letting go, obsession with material gain, miserliness, and yearning – desire to possess what others have, clinging to desirable objects of sense, etc.

In a subtle form, thriftiness – a kind of reluctance to waste things – appears to have the element of lobha in its root. While the stronger one turns itself into grasping onto the mind object as sense desire.

It has the function "to stick" and the manifestation of lobha is not giving up. The proximate cause is seeing the enjoyment in things that lead to bondage.

Lobha can turn easily into **dosa** when one fails to get the desirable object and thus creates all the possible **akusala kamma** (unwholesome deeds).

One needs to learn how to be contented (**santosa**) and let go of sensual lust (**kāma**). One needs to watch out that clinging to rules and rituals will hinder one's spiritual progress.

LOKA

…world, realms

There are 31 states of existence into which beings are born, according to their **kamma**.

Basically they are divided into 3 groups of **bhava** (becoming, or state of existence)

1. **Kāmabhava** (sensual world, plane of desire)
   a) The 4 **Apāya-bhūmi** (plane of misery) or lower world: Niraya (hells), Tiracchāna-yoni (animal realm), Peta-yoni (hungry ghosts realm) and Asura-yoni (demon world).
   b) 7 **Kāmasugati-bhūmi** (happy states): Manussa (human realm); Cātummahārājika, Tāvatiriṃsa, Yāma, Tusita, Nimmānarati, Paranimmitavasavatti heavens (deva realms)
2. **Rūpabhava** (plan of form) or **Brahmaloka**
   Consist of 16 categories of distinction depending on the stage and intensity of the four stages of **jhāna** (a state of serene contemplation).
3. **Arūpabhava** (formless plane)
   In the 4 highest realms there is only mind and no physical form.

METTĀ

...loving-kindness, divine love, active good will

It is also a warm and friendly feeling of good will and concern for the well being and happiness of one self and others. It is a practice of positive mental qualities to overcome anger (**dosa**), ill will, hatred and aversion.

Just as a mother will protect her only child, even at the risk of her life, even so one should cultivate boundless love towards all living beings.

Metta should be radiated in equal measure towards oneself, and to friends, enemies and neutral persons, regardless of their strength and size, whether they are seen or unseen, whether they dwell far away or near.

The culmination of this metta is the identification of oneself with all beings, making no difference between oneself and others thus the so-called "I" does not exist.

Metta is neither passionate love (**pema**) nor desire to possess (want). It is above the normal human love of caring, trust and respect. It is universal and limitless in its scope.

Metta possesses a magnetic power that can produce a good influence on others even at a distance.

MITTA

...friend, companion

Kalyāṇa Mitta – Spiritual friends and friendship.

The purpose of friendship is to grow mutually, to improve spirituality in faith (**saddhā**), generosity (**cāga**), virtue (**sīla**), knowledge and wisdom (**paññā**).

It is the forerunner of goodness in life such as happiness, wealth, opportunity, etc. It is the supporting condition for the growth of all goodness.

A real friend is a friend who helps when in need, who shares the same weal and woes with you, who gives good counsel and who sympathizes.

An enemy disguised as a friend is one who associates for gain (a taker), who render lips services (a talker), who flatters (a flatterer) and who brings ruin to your wealth (a spender).

The qualities of a good friend are, one who...

1. gives what is hard to give (**dāna**)
2. does what is hard to do
3. hears what is hard to hear or bear
4. confesses (shares) his, or her, own secret with you
5. keeps others' secrets
6. in need, forsakes one not
7. despises one not when one is ruined.

MUDITĀ

…sympathetic joy, altruistic joy, appreciative joy – it is the congratulatory attitude of a person

Its chief characteristic is happy acquiescence in others' prosperity and success. It is one of the four Sublime Abodes of Conduct (**Brahma Vihāras**). The other three are **Mettā**, **Karuṇā** and **Upekkhā**.

By rejoicing in the skillful action and merits of others, one tends to eradicate the jealousy (**issā**) which would lead to unwholesome deeds through action, speech and thoughts. The practice of muditā demands great personal effort and strong will power.

The development of muditā requires systematic evaluation, Right Understanding and moderation. Hence, one should always be mindful of its near enemy, which is laughter, merriment, excitableness and exhilaration, while its far enemy is jealousy and envy.

Muditā is like a mother's joy over the success and youthfulness of her child. A Buddhist practising muditā will happily say, "**Sādhu**! Sādhu! Sādhu!" which means well done or excellent, to rejoice in the merits of others.

PAÑCA-SĪLA

…Five Precepts – they form the basic Buddhist code of conduct with the objective of guarding the sense doors

I undertake to observe the precept to abstain…

1. …from destroying living beings (**pāṇātipātā**). With the cultivation of loving kindness and compassion, this precept helps in controlling the passion of hate and anger in us.
2. …from taking what is not given (**adinnādānā**). Avoiding stealing, robbing, swindling or even taking more than what is given, we exercise self control over the desire to possess things belonging to others. In other words, one is practising generosity and sincerity, and is developing trustworthiness.
3. …from sexual misconduct (**kāmesu-micchācārā**). By curbing our lust for excessive sensual pleasures such as adultery, we show respect for the safety and integrity of others and cultivate contentment.
4. …from false speech (musāvādā). Lying or deceiving (by telling less than one should) are the negative values of honesty. One should avoid using cheating, exaggeration and slander to gain wealth, fame and power.
5. …from drugs and liquor (surā). This way is not one of escapism from reality. One should be mindful at all times and be self-controlled.

PĀRAMĪ

...to go beyond, perfection, excellent virtues, noblest qualities of the ***Bodhisattas*** *(Buddhas-to-be)*

Dasa **Pāramitā** (10 Perfections) – a line of conduct, or the pre-requisites for Enlightenment. The practice of these paramitas is enjoined with wisdom (**paññā**), compassion (**karuṇā**) and self-lessness.

The aspirants are required to perfect themselves through strenuous development and cultivation in numerous cycles of birth and death.

The 10 Perfections are:

1. **Dāna** (Charity)
2. **Sīla** (Morality)
3. **Nekkhamma** (Renunciation)
4. **Paññā** (Wisdom)
5. **Viriya** (Energy)
6. **Khanti** (Patience)
7. **Sacca** (Truthfulness)
8. **Adhiṭṭhāna** (Determination)
9. **Mettā** (Loving-kindness)
10. **Upekkhā** (Equanimity)

PŪJĀ

*…a gesture of worship or respect, usually that of raising the hands and palms together **(añjali)***

A Buddhist pays homage to the Buddha **Rūpa** (image) representing the Teacher Himself, the **sārīrika** (relics) of the Holy One, which are normally housed in a **stupa** (pagoda) and the **Bodhi** tree which protected the **Buddha** during His striving for enlightenment.

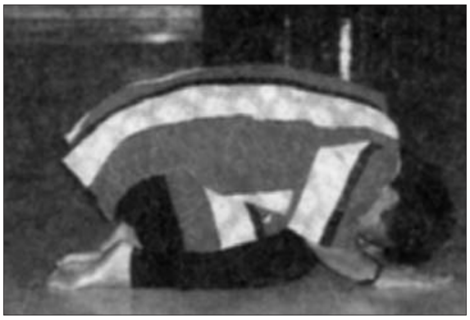
Besides these three objects of veneration, Buddhists also pay respect to their **Guru** (teacher) and their elders (parents).



2-point reverence
(both knees and toes on the floor with an añjali gesture)



5-point reverence
(both palms, elbows, knees, toes and forehead on the floor)



SAMĀDHI

...concentration, contemplation on reality, the state of even-mindedness

Sammā-samādhi (Right Concentration) – It is the development of one-pointedness of the mind. It opens the gate to insight and understanding of the Four Noble Truths.

A concentrated mind acts as a powerful aid to see things as they truly are. Thus one can realize the three characteristics of life, which are **anicca** (impermanence), **dukkha** (unsatisfactoriness) and **anattā** (soullessness).

The Buddha recommended 40 objects of meditation for the development of **sammā-samādhi**. They include some of the essential methods such as **mettā-bhāvanā** (meditation on loving-kindness), **kāyagatāsati** (the reflection on the 32 impure parts of the body), **ānāpānasati** (mindfulness on breathing), **maraṇānusati** (reflection on death), etc.

Once a yogi achieves a certain level of concentration, he should develop insight meditation (**vipassanā**).

SARAṆA

…refuge, protection, shelter, house

Ti-saraṇa: the Threefold Refuges (the **Buddha**, the **Dhamma** and the **Sangha**.)

Every faithful lay Buddhist takes refuge in the Buddha, Dhamma and Sangha as their daily guide and inspiration.

We take refuge in the Buddha, the Teacher, who fully comprehended the Path to deliverance. As an incomparable guide and Teacher, he showed us the Way to Liberation

We take refuge in the Dhamma, His Teachings, or the ultimate Truth and the only Way to end suffering that leads us from darkness to spiritual light.

We take refuge in the Sangha, the community of the disciples of the Buddha, who have realized or are striving to realize the Law of Deliverance. Their noble example inspires and guides us on the Path of Liberation.

There are no hard rules or rites and rituals required for one to take refuge in the Ti-saraṇa. One is considered a true Buddhist only if he observes and follows the teachings of the Buddha.

…the Dispensation of the Teachings of the Buddha

Buddha-sāsana – the duration, beginning from the time of His first Sermon (Dhamma-cakka-pavathana Sutta) delivered to the first five disciples in the Deer Park at Isipatana, to the decline and disappearance of His teachings.

By the end of His sāsana, five disappearances will occur in the following sequence:

1. The attainment of **Arahantship** after 1,000 years.
2. The practices, such as meditation (**bhāvanā**) and observing the five precepts. Monks will reduce their precept observance to four.
3. The learning of the **Buddha-dhamma**. There will be no patronage from the devotees and the monks will stop teaching the Buddha-dhamma. The whole Buddha-dhamma will disappear and leave only the last four lines in a stanza.
4. Symbols such as the monks' robes. Monks will only wear yellow tags to represent themselves as the community of monks.
5. Relics (**sārīrika**). All the Buddha relics will reassemble in the image of the Buddha, and will finally disappear to mark the end of the Buddha-sasana.

SĪLA

...moral precepts, code of morality.
Buddhist ethics

It consists of Right Speech (**sammā vācā**), Right Action (**sammā kammanta**) and Right Livelihood (**sammā ajivā**).

We can divide Sīla into two categories.

1. *The Avoidance*

   Speech: lying, slandering, frivolous talk, harsh speech.

   Action: killing, stealing, excessive sensual indulgence (adultery, gambling, drugs and liquor).

   Livelihood: work that harms, deprive or takes others' lives (butchering, fishing, hunting, slavery); entails the use of falsehood (deceit, trickery, usury); is acquired through sexual indulgence (prostitution, pornography); involves intoxication (liquor, drugs, poisons); trading in arms and deadly weapons.

2. *The Performance*

   Speech: truthful (**sacca**), beneficial, pleasant and polite, and timely.

   Action: compassion (**karuṇā**), loving kindness (**mettā**) and wisdom (**paññā**).

   Livelihood: earnings that are lawfully gained, not generating sorrow for oneself and others; energetic – doing with our own hands and applying effort.

TI-PIṬAKA

...Three Baskets (the function of storing up) is an extensive body of Canonical Pali Literature in which is enshrined the teachings of Gotama Buddha. It was compiled and classified in a systematical order according to its subjects

The **Vinaya Piṭaka** (Rules of Discipline for the Sangha) incorporated the injunctions and admonitions of the Buddha on modes of conduct and restraint to the Order of Sangha. There are 17 major and 210 minor rules for a **bhikkhu,** and 25 major and 286 minor rules for a bhikkhuni to observe.

The general discourses and sermons delivered by the Buddha are collected and classified in the **Suttanta Piṭaka**. They are divided into 5 **Nikāyas** (Collections) – **Dīgha Nikāya** (Long Discourses): 34 suttas; **Majjhima Nikāya** (Medium Length): 152 suttas; **Saṃyutta Nikāya** (Kindred Sayings): 7762 suttas; **Anguttara Nikāya** (Gradual Sayings): 9557 suttas; and **Khuddaka Nikāya** (Smaller) – which includes the **Dhammapada** verses and **Jātaka** stories.

The philosophical aspect of the Buddha's Teachings that deals with ultimate Truths (**Paramattha sacca**), the investigation into the mind (**nāma**) and body (**rūpa**) are classified under the **Abhidhamma Piṭaka**. (Higher Dhamma)

…speech

Speech is the most powerful tool in creating goodness and evil for oneself, for others or both. It also has the power to destroy happiness and sorrow for oneself, for others or both.

We often forget that the first consideration in the act of speaking is always the choice to remain silent. And if we were to choose the option to speak we should ensure that the words spoken benefit both oneself and others.

We must understand the natural characteristics our speech. Once our words reach the ears of the listener – which are the doors to his heart – they cannot be taken back. Speech also reflects the credibility of the speaker – we are measured by the way and manner in which we speak.

Speech that should be avoided is:

> Falsehood (**musāvādā**), slandering (to divide others), frivolous speech (gossip) and harsh (unskillful) speech.

The qualities of Right Speech are:

> Truth (**sacca** – what we see, hear, understand or cognize), beneficial (constructive, motivating, etc.) and pleasant or polite (the listener can appreciate it). The purpose of speaking is to bring out the best in the listener and oneself.

PALI PRONUNCIATION GUIDE

As Pali writing does not have its own alphabet, people have adopted their own alphabet to write Pali and to pronounce it phonetically — as it is written.

The Pali alphabet is made up of forty-one letters. These are divided into eight vowels, thirty-two consonants, and one pure nasal sound called 'niggahita'. The letters are classified into the categories shown by the following:

8 vowels:	a ā i ī u ū e o
5 gutturals:	k kh g gh ṅ
5 palatals:	c ch j jh ñ
5 cerebrals:	t th d dh n
5 dentals:	ṭ ṭh ḍ ḍh ṇ
5 labials:	p ph b bh m
5 semi-vowels:	y r ḷ l v
1 sibilant:	s
1 spirant:	h
1 pure nasal:	ṃ

Among the five classes of mutes, the gutturals are formed in the throat, the palatals with the tongue pressed against the front palate, the cerebrals with the tip of the tongue in contact with the back of the palate, the dentals with the tip of the tongue against the teeth, and the labials with the lips. Among the semi-vowels, ḷ

is cerebral and **l** is dental. Since a distinctive cerebral sound is not found in English, the pronunciation of the dental only is given below for those letters coming in both forms. The cerebral counterparts should be spoken with a similar sound, but uttered with the tongue placed against the palate rather than the teeth.

Again among the mutes, **k**, **g**, **c**, **j**, **t**, **d**, **ṭ**, **ḍ**, **p**, and **b** are unaspirates; **kh**, **gh**, **ch**, **jh**, **th**, **dh**, **th**, **dh**, **ph**, and **bh** are aspirates; and **ṅ**, **ñ**, **ṇ**, **n**, and **m** are nasals. The aspirates are single letters which are pronounced like their unaspirated counterparts with a slightly forceful outbreath added to them. Hence, only the pronunciation of the unaspirates is given here.

Pronunciation of the vowels:

a	is like	u in hut
ā	is like	a in father
i	is like	i in pin
ī	is like	ee in beet
u	is like	u in pull
ū	is like	oo in pool
e	is like	a in bake
o	is like	o in hole

Pronunciation of the consonants:

k	is like	k in king
g	is like	g in gone
n	is like	ng in sing
c	is like	ch in church
j	is like	j in joy
ñ	is like	ny in canyon
ṭ	is like	t in top
t	is like	t in thigh
d	is like	th in the
n	is like	n in name
ḍ	is like	d in dog
ṇ	is like	n in not
p	is like	p in pot
b	is like	b in bat
m	is like	m in mother
y	is like	y in yes
r	is like	r in run
l	is like	l in long
v	is like	v in vine
s	is like	s in sun
h	is like	h in hot

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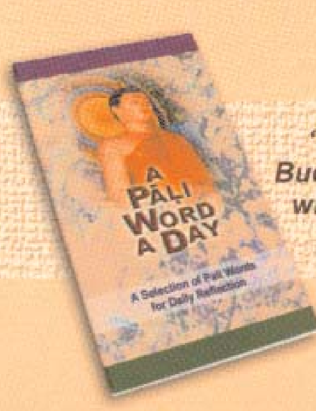
Ven. Dr. K. Sri Dhammananda

In Commemoration of the Occasion of His 80th Birthday

By the power of the merits accrued from the distribution of this booklet, may the Venerable be blessed with good health, long life and well-being.

May His selfless service and compassion to humanity be an inspiration to mankind.

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"This booklet aims to assist new Buddhist students who are unfamiliar with some Pali words often used in the study of Buddhism."

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